

UNIFORMITY OF PROMOTION SYSTEMS

DCI ACTION ITEM:

Prepare a paper that surveys the operation of the panels and boards throughout the Agency by Career Service to include how promotion recommendations are made and implemented and how the results are publicized. The paper should include recommendations for improving consistency and publicity.

DISCUSSION:

The competitive promotion review and evaluation system of the various Career Services have been examined for elements of common approach. All use panels or boards, review personnel at least annually, and except for the DDO, provide for panel or board action at the Career Service Sub-group level. All panels and boards, except in the DDO, function in an advisory capacity to the Heads of the Career Service or the head of the office concerned. The results of the promotion exercises are published by some components, but this is not a universal practice. There are also variances in schedules for evaluation and promotion. Some panels review on a Career Service issued schedule for individual grades, others review and promote all grades at one time. Some promote annually, others on a six month schedule. There are a few offices where the review process is on an annual basis, but the promotions are made throughout the year. There are also differences in the extent of publication as well as the detail of the criteria used for the promotion evaluation.

After consideration of the various systems and approaches to the promotion process, we have developed five recommendations, directed to provide basic procedures common to the competitive promotion exercise Agency-wide, but which allow for the discrete nature of the Career Services. We do not believe the proposals will impact unduly on the systems now operating in any one of the Services, but should at the same time assure Agency employees of the equality of treatment throughout the organization. Some of these recommendations are already part of the system in the Services, others will be a new requirement for some of the components.

RECOMMENDATION I:

The evaluation for promotion exercise will be related to the Fitness Report cycle for the grade under consideration. The board or panel evaluation and promotion recommendation actions will be completed

within 90 days of the ending date of the Fitness Report period so that approved recommendations may be made effective the first pay period thereafter for all Agency employees being promoted to the specific grade.

Example: GS-12 and GS-13 Fitness Reports now cover the period 1 January to 31 December. The approved promotions to GS-13 and GS-14 would be effective the first pay period after 31 March.

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The basis for the promotion review cycle will be that established for the preparation and receipt of Fitness Reports published and will be followed by all Career Services and Career Service Sub-groups. If this recommendation is approved, it may be necessary to reprogram the schedule to avoid overweighting some periods.

To allow use of headroom which may accrue by attrition during the year, Career Service or Career Service Sub-groups have the option for a second review and promotion exercise six months after the one based on the Fitness Report cycle.

Example: The GS-12 and GS-13 personnel reviewed in the January-March period could again be reviewed during July-September with promotions effective the first pay period after 31 September.

RECOMMENDATION II:

A board and panel structure will be established by the Head of the Career Service to administer the competitive promotion exercises of the Service. The Career Service Sub-group panel structure may be modified in the DDO where a single service concept supports a panel system Career Service-wide on the basis of grade and function.

The structure will consist of:

a. A Career Service Board

(1) Membership will be composed of senior officers of the Service, either by position or appointment.

(2) Responsible for competitive evaluation and promotion recommendations for personnel in grades GS-15 and above.

(3) Responsible for the review, in an advisory capacity, of the GS-14 to GS-15 Sub-group panel recommendations. If there is disagreement with the panel proposals, the matter will be referred to the Head of the Career Service for resolution. (This action recognizes the importance of the feeder group to senior management grades).

b. A Senior Secretarial Career Service Panel

(1) Membership may be by position or appointment and in the Career Services where there are Sub-groups each such group will be represented on the Panel.

(2) Responsible for the competitive evaluation and promotion recommendations of secretarial personnel in grades GS-08 and above.

c. Career Service Sub-group Panels

(1) Offices may establish as many panels as required for the grade or functional structure of the component.

(2) Membership may be by position or appointment.

(3) Responsible for competitive evaluation and promotion recommendations of personnel in all grades through GS-14 except for the GS-08 and above secretarial personnel.

Personnel assigned to membership on boards and panels will serve for established periods of time. Boards and panels may have other personnel management duties, such as assignment and training recommendations, as requested by the Head of the Career Service or the Head of the Career Service Sub-group.

The membership of the boards and panels of all Career Services will be published. The form of publication may be the Personnel Handbooks (this would simplify the announcement process if membership is by position) or a notice in the component's publication system.

Boards and panels may accept supervisors' recommendations or component rankings, but such data should be regarded only as advisory material in developing the evaluations and final recommendations.

The Career Service Boards and the Career Service Sub-group panels serve in an advisory capacity to the Heads of the Career Service or the Head of the Career Service Sub-group, as appropriate. The Head of the Career Service or the Head of the Career Service Sub-group should not unilaterally make changes in the recommended list and should consult with the board or panel to resolve differences. The Heads of the Career Services, however, are responsible by regulation for the management and development of their personnel and the ultimate decision for promotion remains with that officer, or an officer to whom the authority has been delegated.

RECOMMENDATION III:

All personnel in grades GS-15 and below will be evaluated and reviewed for promotion at least once a year at the Fitness Report cycle period, regardless of time in grade or other consideration, unless an individual is in the process of separation from the Agency.

RECOMMENDATION IV:

The list of approved promotions will be published. The promotion actions approved by the Board and Senior Secretarial Panel will be published to the Career Service; panel actions may either be published within the office concerned or Career Service-wide, dependent on the scope of the panel's responsibility and the Career Service interest.

RECOMMENDATION V:

The Heads of the Career Services will develop and publish criteria for promotion. Criteria which are common to all components of the Career Service will be published in the Personnel Handbook for that Service. This data may be supplemented with criteria developed for specific requirements or pertinent to an individual Career Sub-group. This supplemental criteria will be published in the normal publication system of the Sub-group to which it applies.

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The general guidelines for promotion consideration are provided [redacted] This recommendation requires the development of specific criteria in terms of personal qualities, identified elements of performance, and level of functional abilities among other considerations for evaluation, and should include provision for judgments of potential development as well as past performance. The Fitness Report should normally provide the basic data for applying the criteria, but boards or panels are free to solicit additional information as needed.

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